



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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Jordan: Risk to men, who have been accused by relatives of a girl, of engaging in an illicit affair, and threatened with death; protection available to such men; examples of cases in which men have been "honour-killed"
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Among the documentary sources consulted by the Research Directorate, only women were mentioned as victims of "honour" crimes (AFP 4 Mar. 2004; *ibid.* 31 May 2004; *ibid.* 27 Jun. 2004; AP 20 Apr. 2004; *ibid.* 22 Apr. 2004; *ibid.* 29 July 2004; HRW Apr. 2004; *ibid.* 20 Apr. 2004; IPR Middle East News 12 May 2004; UPI 3 Jun. 2004). However, an anthropologist at Radboud University in the Netherlands, who has done extensive fieldwork in Jordan, provided the following information on male honour crimes in 25 August 2004 correspondence with the Research Directorate.

The anthropologist indicated that while honour crimes are more often directed toward women, men can also be the object of such crimes. In Jordan, the strong social stigma associated with illicit sexual relations means that threats of "violent revenge" are commonplace. These threats are directed at both the woman and the man involved in the affair. The anthropologist stressed that it was not the actual illicit liaison but rather the fact that it was made public that provokes a response. The degree to which the family is publicly shamed and the extent to which the affair can be proven both influence the likelihood of threats being carried out. Referring to not only Jordanian but honour crimes in general, the anthropologist stated that murder is not a typical outcome of honour crimes and occurs only in the most extreme scenarios; normal methods of saving face include divorcing an adulterous woman, marrying off a young woman, moving away, or "finding excuses" for certain behaviours.

The anthropologist went on to mention that couples that do not meet the approval of their families, society or Jordanian law (e.g. in the case of a Muslim woman and a Christian man) commonly leave Jordan for fear of revenge. The anthropologist had come across a case in which relatives treated their transgressing kin as deceased. When asked about the daughter, the family told the anthropologist that they would shoot her and her husband if they ever returned. According to the anthropologist,

...[a] man who has an illicit relation with a girl but does not want to marry her, or the man who seduces a married woman and is discovered would do well to seek refuge elsewhere. When people talk about violent revenge this is always stated in terms of death. A severe beating of the man who violated the honour of a family is not sufficient to clear the blemished honour.

The anthropologist indicated that she was unaware of any protection available to men threatened with honour crimes, apart from the "often lighter" punishment for honour crimes.

The anthropologist was aware of one case in Jordan in which an unmarried Muslim man eloped with a Christian girl (their marriage would not be legal in Jordan). The girl's brother tracked them down and attacked the man and both men were killed in the ensuing gun battle. Apart from this "historical case," the anthropologist said that while violent threats are often expressed, most couples flee before they must face any severe reprisals.

In 31 August 2004 correspondence with the Research Directorate, a professor of anthropology at Linköping University in Sweden, who specializes in gender development in Jordan and Syria, agreed that in Jordan, men who are accused of having illicit affairs can also be subject to threats. She added that to her knowledge, no protection was available from the Jordanian State. However, the anthropologist went on to state that she had never come across a case in which a man had been killed in an honour crime, as women are generally blamed when an honour crime involves illicit sex.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Agence France Presse (AFP). 27 June 2004. "Teenage Runaway Killed By Brother in New Jordan Honour Crime." (Dialog)

_____. 31 May 2004. "Jordanian Woman Killed by Brothers in New 'Honour Crime'." (Dialog)

_____. 4 March 2004. "Jordanian Man Kills Sister for 'Family Honour': Daily." (Dialog)

Associated Press (AP). 29 July 2004. Jamal Halaby. "Jordanian Probe into Honor Killing Book Finds It Fabricated Events." (Dialog)

_____. 22 April 2004. "Jordanian Man Stabs Pregnant Sister to Death to 'Cleanse Family Honor'." (Dialog)

_____. 20 April 2004. Shafika Mattar. "U.S. Human Rights Group Accuses Jordanian Government of Failing to Protect Female 'Honour' Crime Victims." (Dialog)

Human Rights Watch (HRW). 20 April 2004. "Jordan: Victims Jailed in 'Honor' Crime Cases." (Dialog)

_____. April 2004. Vol. 16, No. 1. "Honoring the Killers: Justice Denied for 'Honor' Crimes in Jordan." <<http://hrw.org/reports/2004/jordan0404/>> [Accessed 18 Aug. 2004]

Info-Prod Research (IPR) Middle East News. 12 May 2004. "Jordan: Man Walks Free after Killing Sister for Reasons of 'Family Honor'." (Dialog)

Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden. 31 August 2004. Correspondence from professor of anthropology specializing in gender development in Jordan and Syria.

Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands. 25 August 2004. Correspondence from anthropologist specializing in gender studies in Algeria and Jordan.

United Press International (UPI) News. 3 June 2004. "New Mother Slain in Jordan Honor Killing." (Dialog)

Additional Sources Consulted

Several experts in Jordanian gender studies or honour crimes did not respond to the Research Directorate's requests for information within time constraints.

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